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IMPERATIVE OF ETHICS TRAINING IN ORGANISATIONS

AIYEWA, Victoria Irete & GBEREVBIE, Daniel Esemie

Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University, Ota,
Ogun State, Nigeria

Abstract

In today's decisive world, ethical behaviour may on occasions appear to be optional to imperative business and individual objectives. In any case, the effect of an organisation's employees' ethical decisions can be similarly as critical as the effect of their business decisions. No more than one poor decision could place an organisation in an unsavoury reputation damaging scandal, expose profitable cerebral assets to hacking programmers, bring about serious individual and organisational fines or cause even more deplorable scenarios. This is the reason it is highly necessary for employees to be equipped by training them on ethics in an organisation. Using secondary data, this paper throws light on the benefits organisations derive from training their staff on ethical norms and standards. It recommends that for organisations to accomplish its goals of infusing ethical behaviour and attitude into the psyche of its employees, they should take more stringent steps to promote ethics training so that it becomes an integral part of the organisation culture. This can be achieved by management demonstrating keen interest in the ethics training process and encouraging employees who prove through their actions that the ethics training they received has impacted on them. Training employees to have the capacity to settle on ethical choices ought to be given top precedence in any organisation that desires to boost productivity and create positive outcomes at the decisive point.

Key words: *Ethical behaviour, organisation, training, workplace ethics*

INTRODUCTION

Organisations who go the extra mile in embracing sound business ethics in the workplace frequently show more efficiency and staff continuation than those individuals who see work ethics as simply an issue of compliance (Hunt, 2012). Training employees on workplace ethics equips them to have the capacity and capability to deal with genuine difficulties in their workplace and acquaints them with Codes of Conduct and ethics policies. The training is intended to help employees understand their individual commitments and the effects of violations (Rice and Drelinger, 2017). The training will similarly improve the probability that the ethics strategy and code of conduct are complied with companywide (Hunt, 2012).

Administrators and supervisors need to grasp the organisation's ethics policies and the significance of implementing it. They ought to be trained on the organisation's approach, and also the need to observe the most noteworthy benchmarks of ethics, trustworthiness and respectability in the workplace (Hunt, 2012). It is correlated however, that supervisors and



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administrators recognise that all employees at all levels in the organisation must maintain ethical guidelines. All employees are to endeavour to direct business dealings and relationships with people inside and outside of the organisation professionally, lawfully and dependably to the organisation's ethics and code of conduct (Hunt, 2012).

The reason behind ethics training is "to empower employees to distinguish and manage ethical issues, building up their ethical instincts, which are inherent in regular decisions and activities" (Sacconi, de Colle and Baldin, 2002:33). In the meantime, ethics training exercises plan to "empower every organisational member to comprehend, distribute and deliver the merits expressed in the code of ethics" (de Colle and Gonella, 2002:3).

The major point in this paper therefore is the usefulness of ethics training in organisations. Training in ethics aids individuals from an organisation critic the ethical authenticity of their choices, empowering them to apply moral standards and values in business decision making (Dzurgba, 2003). In the meantime, ethics training cultivates the employees' understanding and compliance with the organisation's ethical vision signifying a commonly adequate harmony between various partners and stakeholders (Sacconi, de Colle and Baldin, 2002). Secondary data obtained from relevant books, journals and the internet were fully utilised to accomplish this work. The paper is structured into six sections. Section one serves as the introduction, section two is the review of related works, section three looks at the methodology, section four discusses the imperatives of ethics training, while sections five and six round up with the conclusion and way forward, respectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Ethics

The expression "ethics" is gotten from the old Greek word "ἠθικός" - *ethikos*, which thusly is derived from "ἦθος" - *ethos* which is "*habit*" or '*custom*'. *Ethikos* signifies '*identifying with one's character*' (Trainagents, 2016). Ethics as indicated by Ikotun (2006): mirrors a general public's point of view on human behaviour and articulates actions positive or negative with references to some standard or measure as forced by or particularly important to that society. Larson (2000) characterized ethics as managing reflections of circumstances where custom has lost its immediate applicability or legitimacy and where acceptable behaviour becomes an open question; where custom in this setting alludes comprehensively to the conventional norms in a general public which are executed or acknowledged without inquiry. As indicated by Denhardt and Denhardt (2006), ethics is interested with the procedure by which we illuminate what is good and bad and by which we follow up on what we take to be correct; ethics includes the utilization of reason in deciding a legitimate strategy, which is the search for good norms.

Ethics is a scholastic subject or discipline that was created by the proficient Greek thinker, Aristotle, who lived in old Greece (384-322). Aristotle came up with the descriptive word *ethicos* and the noun *ethica* in the Greek tongue. His contemporary, Roman scholar Cicero, following close on his tail, came up with the proportionate terms in the Latin tongue. Cicero

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created the modifier *moralis* and the noun *moralitas*. Both the Greek and Latin terms were later converted into the English tongue as 'ethical' and 'ethics' as well as 'moral' and 'morality' respectively (Dzurgba, 2005).

Ethics alludes to the qualities or principles of behaviour held by a group or individual and is a "precise review and assessment of human activities and goals so as to decide their goodness or badness, rightness or wrongness, correctness or incorrectness" (Ayantayo, 2011:125). Ethics considers the standards of decision making (oughtness), concerning moral issues (good and bad), whose precepts depend on reason, standards, religious convictions, results, objectives and qualities, that originate from social presuppositions and on the reality of man's freedom and responsibility to settle on legitimate decisions. Ethics has been characterized as the tenets or standard behaviour for members of a profession and "those norms or morals a man sets for himself or herself with respect to what is good and bad or right and wrong" (Babayemi, 2011:137).

Ethics is concerned with human values or behaviour. Behaviour includes internal exercises, for example, thought processes, aims and desires and outward exercises, for example, speech, development, composing, selling and purchasing (Dzurgba, 2003). Ethics is wilful in nature- it is self-legislation. It is partitioned into two fields: normative ethics and meta ethics:

- i. **Normative Ethics:** is also known as moral philosophy. It is concerned with exhibiting and advocating a manual for right behaviour. It utilizes terms, for example, 'great', 'awful', "right" and "wrong" to express inclinations, choices and decisions or to censure, pressure and commend (Laninhun, 2011).
- ii. **Meta Ethics:** is also called analytical or critical ethics. It methodically studies the implications of moral terms and of judgements utilized as a part of normative ethics, their capacities and the methods for supporting normative judgements (Laninhun, 2011).

Ethics tries to bring about order into the way individuals consider life and act. It answers such questions as "What should I do?", "What should I say?", "How should I act?" and "How should I live?". What is ethically reasonable action and what is not? Basically, ethics helps people to settle on reasonable decisions between what is good and bad (Laninhun, 2011).

Frankena (1995:4) says "ethics is a moral philosophy or philosophical thinking about morality, moral problems and moral judgements". In each general society along these lines, regardless of whether at individual or group level, it is important to recognize right or good behaviour from wrong or bad behaviour keeping in mind the end goal is to guarantee harmonious living. Harmonious co-existence is critical not only to guarantee the continued survival of the general public, but also to ensure its subjective development (Oyeshile, 2002). Ethical codes are prescribed to guide experts in their practice, particularly keeping in mind the end goal is to manage against corrupt, sharp and wasteful practices (Echekwube, 1999).

Ethical philosophy includes systematizing, shielding and prescribing ideas of good and bad behaviour. Ethics is not simply hypothetical or deliberative, it is commonsense and directive

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also. As such, it guides our attention regarding the proper approach to act as people with a specific end goal to accomplish human wellbeing in the society (Agulanna, 2011).

Ethics mirrors a society's point of view on human behaviour and articulates actions good or bad with references to some standard or paradigm as imposed by or is particularly pertinent to that society (Ikotun, 2004). Ethics is a dynamic subject in some ways, which is the reason it is viewed as a 'philosophical discipline', however it is likewise concerned with the utilization of particular methods of thinking into action (Ikotun, 2004).

The Concept of Training

Training is the activity leading to skilled behaviour. It is a type of specialised education aimed at giving the student a specific or particular information, aptitude and attitude which he should have to adequately perform in a given position, i.e. on work, e.g. a tailor must have the ability to cut garments and work the sewing machine and the right attitude to attract and hold clients (Onasanya, 1999).

Training is critical for new and old employees, trying to enhance present or future performance (Ivancevich, 2010). It is the efficient procedure put in place to steer the attitude of employees toward a path intended to enable the organisation attain its goals. It can be connected to occupation aptitudes and capacities already on ground. Training's predilection aids employees gain mastery in the particular skills and aptitude required to be effective (Longnecker and Fink, 2005).

It can be said that training is an allusive attempt by an organisation to help promote employees' acquisition of employment related skills. These abilities integrate learning, inherent ability or patterns which are basic for effectual job performance. An objective of training is for employees to gain mastery over the information, abilities and practices stressed in the programmes and to utilise them in all activities (Noe, 2008).

The function of training is to aid in developing people individually and assist them into becoming more sure and skilful in their way of living and occupations (Pont, 2003). It is organized exercises centred around getting individuals to reliably recreate practices without variety, yet with progressively more noteworthy productivity (automatically) regardless of the possibility that conditions around them change (e.g. catching a football paying little heed to speed, range, stature and climate conditions) (Stolovitch and Keeps, 2004).

Training is an arranged and organised attempt to adjust or acquire knowledge/expertise/mental attitude by learning experience, to accomplish effectual execution in an activity or range of activities. Its design, in the work situation, is to aid the employee to acquire abilities in order that they may perform satisfactorily; an assigned task or work and actualise their potentials (Buckley and Caple, 2009).

Training can be understood to be a learning experience for the simple fact that it seeks a reasonable permanent change in an individual that will boost their ability to perform at work. It includes the transformation of aptitudes, cognition, attitudes or social demeanour. It implies transforming the knowledge of the workers, their manner of work, their behaviour toward

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their work or their collaborations with colleagues or their supervisor (DeCenzo and Robbins, 1998).

Training Policy: Every organisation that understands the requirement for training must have a training policy on ground. A good training policy should contain a broad statement, which if broken down should contain the following points:

1. That training, much like every other personnel matter, should be close to the Chief Executive and include all line and staff supervisors.
2. That all employees should have the opportunity of receiving training appropriate to their jobs and positions.
3. That training should aim at a three-point programme of empowering staff to obtain new abilities and knowledge, helping workers to enhance their performance by adjusting their shortcomings and preparing workers for higher responsibilities later on by building up their dormant interests and hidden talents (Onasanya, 1999:201).

Only after training needs have been ascertained should trainees be selected. The correct number of staff, either for production or promotion purposes should be selected for training. Training, development, compensation and promotion policies should be closely related. Moreover, training as a cost focus should bear relevance to the organisation's overall expenses and be related to the overall revenue of the organisation. Training should supplement recruitment by helping recruits to settle down and perform efficiently and by adjusting clear inadequacies in the selection process (Onasanya, 1999).

Identification of Training Needs

Training needs come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Nonetheless, there must be agreement that there is a need sufficiently critical for no less than two individuals to need to do something about it. It must incorporate the trainee, together with somebody who will help address that issue. Normally, that would be a manager, an administrator or a trainer. Now and again however, needs emerge which the trainee themselves can meet, either on their own or with support and resource from others (Simmonds, 2003).

A few organisations undertake training as though it were a fringe benefit. Under such an idea, the real value cannot be acquired and efforts expended will add up to a waste. Training in an organisation is not synonymous with general education, but rather should be more or less industrial training. This is not the sort of training after which a trainee will be granted a certificate in general education or endorsement of capability in a profession, but a kind of training aimed at giving employees information, aptitudes and attitudes expected to perform particular jobs. Consequently, the identification of training needs should incorporate the analysis of the educational requirements necessary for manpower advancement and development (Onasanya, 1999).

Identifying and evaluating training requirements should rely on the corporate goals and plans of the organisation. The personnel manager or specialist who prepares the manpower plan should likewise with the guide of the job description and job analysis, identify the corporate

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training needs. The responsibility for recognizing and assessing the training needs of the employees rests with their immediate supervisors and line managers as they are closest to the employees in their day by day supervision and organisation (Onasanya, 1999). They assess the employee's performance and in that process choose what training programmes are required to fortify their weak points and enhance their performance and furthermore the vital training to develop their potentials and set them up for promotion to higher positions. When however, a training specialist is utilized, this is an additional advantage to the administrators and line managers in that he can give them expert advice. By no means and under no circumstances can the training officer take the position of the administrator and the line managers (Simmonds, 2003).

Training needs analysis is most indispensable, as it is about gaining agreements to training solutions. The training department should not go about with the mindset that they thoroughly understand the training requirements of the personnel of the organisation. It is vital that the staff are included in the identifying and investigation of needs. Regularly, this is done on a formal basis through appraisal, however in the event that an evaluation or performance management approach is just done once every year, then by definition, it is obsolete. Additionally, any training in view of that approach would be a year and six months outdated, at any rate. It is better for the appraisal to be done twice, thrice or even four times each year (Simmonds, 2003).

What Are Workplace Ethics?

Workplace ethics are norms of commendable conduct at work. They are an arrangement of standards by which to evaluate choices and behaviour in the workplace. Ethical behaviour at work includes understanding what is good and bad as indicated by the constituted standard and unflinchingly doing what the organisation's ethics approach requires. The issue is that in today's quickly changing business climate, it is normally challenging to tell what is correct or wrong. Numerous ethical issues fall in a 'hazy area', where what is correct or wrong is not self-evident (Hunt, 2012). Workplace ethics includes settling on legitimate and upstanding decisions. Doing what is morally right is regularly mistaken for what is simplest, speediest or least expensive. Numerous individuals lately have gone too far for individual benefit or as a result of confused ideas of organisational commitment. Ethics incorporates all workers. A definite comprehension of ethical behaviour at work gives everybody in the organisation with a similar excellent compass to follow in times of susceptibility, disaster and opposition (Hunt, 2012).

The Role of Ethical Corporate Culture in Organisational Performance

Training, teaching and motivating workers to act in manners consistent with both legitimate requirements and ethical expectations is at the centre of wanting to counteract and oversee misconduct. Organisations set up the qualities, behavioural standards and make artefacts that workers observe about everyday life inside the firm. This is accomplished unequivocally through codes of conduct and statements of values/ethics archived in organisational correspondences. Employees learn expectations and know whether values and codes are genuine or quite shallow attempts to avoid legal and civil liability (Brewer, Chandler and Ferrell, 2006). Culture incorporates tales about organization heroes and villains, treatment of

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client complaints, how meetings are directed and in which behaviours and accomplishments get compensated and perceived contrasted with which behaviours are condemned, disregarded or rebuffed.

Managers cannot motivate employees or smooth the progress of their endeavours without viable correspondence about qualities, benchmarks and expectations. Communication is critical in giving direction to ethical measures and activities that give coordination between the useful areas of the business. No programme can be actualized without total comprehension of its goals and employee collaboration to make it work. While most managers and workers don't have "ethics" in their job title, everybody is ultimately responsible (Brewer et al, 2006).

Issues Encountered During Ethics Training

- i. **The "deficit" model of continuing education:** It is the custom to showcase continuing education as a path for individuals to procure knowledge and abilities they need. This pitch however doesn't work for ethics programmes-who wants to accept the fact that they are lacking in ethics. The options are to position ethics training as a preventive (intended to help you maintain a strategic distance from ethical issues later on) or formative (to help you turn into a more astute, more keen professional) measure (Niles, 2003). Both are beneficial yet neither might be a convincing motivation to contribute time and cash to participate.
- ii. **People's craving for quick, viable, helpful data:** The persons undergoing the courses are experts. They are honestly attracted to continuing education programmes that offer genuine answers for quick issues. Yet, ethics training simply doesn't subscribe to "*10 tips you can utilize today*" approaches. Now and then it's elusive to discover the immediate take away advantage from a ethics programme.
- iii. **The need to manage values.** Discussions of ethics unavoidably delves into issues of qualities and character, subjects that some feel are all the more appropriately tended to by religious establishments or expert counsellors.
- iv. **Fear of debate:** To maintain a strategic distance from apparently long winded sermons- or to dodge awkward, dubious issues- ethics trainers may bind themselves to dull substance and hesitant objectives. Covering the substance of the organisation's code and auditing the complaint/mediation process are not a formula for testing, stimulating continuing education (Niles, 2003:1).

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this paper is historical research. This method was chosen because it involves investigating, analysing and interpreting events with a view to arriving at a plausible conclusion. The paper relied on secondary sources of data collection and analysed the work textually. Extensive literature review was conducted to have a fundamental understanding of the subject matter. It is a hypothetical assessment of ethics training in organisations.

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IMPERATIVE OF ETHICS TRAINING IN ORGANISATIONS

In modern-day circumstances, unethical works including bribery and corruption, misappropriation of assets, irreconcilable situations, lewd behaviour, abuse of classified information (Benavides, Dicke and Maleckaite, 2012; Trevino and Nelson, 2013), and other unlawful conducts are prevalent in organisations. This pattern has prompted developing communal concern over the wrong conduct of leaders and public officials, bringing about the resurgence of enthusiasm for ethical issues. These unethical practices affect people and organisations (Kumasey, Bawole, and Hossain, 2017). Gberevbie (2011) is of the view that without proper ethical practices, no organisation can achieve development. Training employees about business ethics is a superb method for setting norms and showing your staff the significance of trustworthiness in business (Valentine and Fleischman, 2004). Dibie (2003:352-353) sees "accountability as holding people responsible for their performance and holding public and private sectors managers responsible for the results of their decisions". Where there is no accountability, ethical standards are bound to be eroded (Gberevbie, 2013). Further studies have proved conclusively that no organisation can achieve any meaningful development without proper ethical standards as guiding principles in business activities (Hegarty and Sims, 1998; Hopkins, 2001; Gberevbie, 2013). The following points further elucidate the importance and merits of ethics training:

- i. **Personal Responsibility:** A quality training strategy on ethics concentrates employees' focus on personal obligation. The employee is shown that he is required to bargain reasonably with everybody and to work to the best of his capacity. At the point when all employees set elevated expectations for personal obligation, procrastination reduces and profitability increases.
- ii. **Teamwork:** A work ethics programme encourages cooperation by imparting trust in associates. Individuals will probably be amiable to cooperating when they acknowledge and regard each other. Work ethics incorporate the idea of shared commitment to a purpose (West and Berman, 2014:200).
- iii. **Staff Morale:** A workplace in which a ethics code has been incorporated is a normally charming and pleasant place to work. Employee morale ascends in an environment that encourages good conduct and sincere interactions. Employees feel more esteemed and thus esteem the work they are doing when they feel the organization they are working for is respectable and purposeful. Anticipate that your workplace will be livelier and more work accomplished when employees are trained in ethics.
- iv. **Avoid Scandal:** Many organizations have closed shop because of circumstances in which employees are found to have engaged in wrongdoing. Organizations need to remain above board in all operations to evade any appearance of indecency. Quality training in ethical behaviour is important to guarantee that everybody in the workplace is completely mindful that they should keep up a high state of professionalism to proceed in their business. For instance, an ethical workplace would likely show zero resistance for such conduct as theft, provocation and improper conduct, implying that the proprietor would disengage any employee found taking part in an ethics offence (West and Berman, 2014:200).



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Workers require the advantage of ethics training so that they as well, can meet the norms set by the organisation's strategies and sets of principles. The following sheds more light on the value of ethical behaviour:

- i. Ethical behaviour is vital in light of the fact that it not just includes making the wisest decision, but at the same time what will be useful for business. Ethical behaviour is the reason for long term achievement in any organisation.
- ii. Ethical behaviour helps to promote the solid public image of the organisation. Individuals have high regard for an organisation that chooses to settle on moral decisions. Customers like working with an organisation they can trust.
- iii. Ethical behaviour makes the best utilization of assets. Finances, time and exertion are put into beneficial activities rather than deviated for sketchy purposes or individual profit.
- iv. Ethical behaviour with respect to all employees, additionally keeps up quality and efficiency. At the point when employees take after ethical principles, they do not compromise or scam the organization or its clients.
- v. Ethical behaviour helps the organisation to follow laws and regulations, yet remind employees that what is lawful is just the absolute minimum of what is moral. An excessive number of organizations and individuals continually discover different approaches to participate in activities that are actually legitimate but secondarily moral.
- vi. Ethical behaviour guarantees good and appropriate relationships with clients and merchants.
- vii. Ethical behaviour supports morale and encourages cooperation. At the point when employees can believe each other and management, they can cooperate all the more amicably and successfully (Navran, 2007:120-121).

Ethics training shows workers what the organisation requires, gives them the chance to work on applying the qualities to hypothetical circumstances and challenges and sets them up to apply those same principles to the real world. Ethics training empowers workers to perceive the moral problems of illogical objectives and guarantees they recognize what assets are accessible for safely raising the issue. It likewise makes it clear to the administrators setting those principles that doing so fosters an unsatisfactory condition in the workplace (Navran, 1997).

CONCLUSION

An ethical partnership is not an interesting situation, but in actual fact, it can be exceptionally effective. An organization that carries out business in an ethical way garners respect from inside the organization and from outside. The requirement for corporate ethics is solid. In a commercial centre loaded with uncalled for rivalry, insidious practices and doubt, the organization that rises with its honesty in place turns into a favoured client choice.

The test for companies is to make an interpretation of their statement of purpose into an ordinary model that employees can use from the meeting room to the frontlines. This is the place training comes in, as it dismisses any hindrance between statement of purpose and

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corporate practice. Ethics training causes staff to react fittingly when sketchy issues come across their paths. An ethical organization is just as solid as its weakest worker. Organisations should take it upon themselves to be certain their staff comprehend and apply ethics policies.

THE WAY FORWARD

For organisations to accomplish their goals of infusing ethical behaviour and attitude into the psyche of its employees, they should take more stringent steps to promote ethics training so that it becomes an integral part of the organisation culture. This can be achieved by management demonstrating keen interest in the ethics training process and encouraging employees who prove through their actions that the ethics training they received has impacted on them. Training employees to have the capacity to settle on ethical choices ought to be given top precedence in any organisation that desires to boost productivity and create positive outcomes at the decisive point. It is therefore recommended that, ethics training concentrate on turning loose participants intrinsic inspiration to be ethical instead of depending exclusively on a compliance attitude that legitimizes ethical conduct through prizes and discipline. At the point when individuals are naturally spurred on, they persist on through troublesome circumstances and are more averse to take alternate ways. By making ethics something that leaders are required to do and need to do, keeping in mind the end goal is to succeed, we can build responsibility to ethics in organisations and diminish the probability of ethical breaches which can probably happen if our field of vision is limited by external motivations.

It is also recommended that, ethics training empower members to be better stewards of an ethical culture, this implies going past addressing their own particular moral quandary to helping other people use sound judgment. Ethics training is an imperative piece of building and managing a culture of perfection. In the event that we can unleash inherent motivation to be ethical and build abilities around boldness, sense making and dialogue ethics, training can help manufacture a better future for organisations.

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